

**Red Wing Sister Cities Commission
Special Meeting
City Council Chambers
October 22, 2025**

Members Present: Chair Austin Knott, Commissioners Tammy Jaynes, Tao Peng, Ingrid Hokanson, Renee Kreye, Ashlyn Werner, Danielle DeWitt, and Sheena Whitlock; Student Advisory Member Nisha Catarino Santiago

Members Absent: Commissioners Shawn Niebling and Kim Clancy (excused absence)

Others Present: Lisa Acker, Staff Liaison; Vicki Jo Lambert, Council Liaison

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Jaynes called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Knott led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. Commissioners Jaynes, Peng, Hokanson, Kreye, Knott, Werner, DeWitt, Whitlock, and Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago were in attendance.

Commissioners Niebling and Clancy were absent and unexcused.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Chair Knott, seconded by Commissioner Jaynes, to approve the agenda as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve the Minutes from the September 24, 2025, Meeting.

A motion was made by Chair Knott, seconded by Commissioner Peng, to approve the minutes as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

6. Public Comment

No one wished to address the Commission.

7. Committee Reports & General Business

A. Finance Report.

Staff Liaison Acker reviewed the October 2025 Finance Report. She stated that the 248 fund had a change because the money was returned to families in the form of a check from the excess funds raised. She noted a Sister Cities Commission budget balance of \$2,924.05.

A motion was made by Commissioner Peng, seconded by Chair Knott, to adopt the Finance Report as presented. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

B. Ikata Student Exchange Committee Updates/Report.

1. Commissioner DeWitt explained that there was one applicant to be the chaperone. She stated that after the interview, the applicant denied the proposal to go on the trip. Commissioner Jaynes added that one application came in late, but the Commission needs to decide if applications should be opened back up and to set a different deadline. Staff Liaison Acker explained several options for the Commission, but a decision on which one needs to be reached for the chaperone to sit in on student interviews in December. Chair Knott agreed that a discussion should take place, so a decision could be made tonight as to what to do. Commissioners discussed the best options for obtaining a chaperone and concluded on opening the application window back up.

Staff Liaison Acker shared some meeting options for finalizing the chaperone. Commissioners discussed what would work best. Staff Liaison stated that the meeting would be moved from November 19 to November 17, with the idea that it would be a brief meeting and then convene to a workshop if needed. Chair Knott asked about the deadline for applications if the window for applications is opened back up. Staff Liaison suggested a deadline of November 7, with room for interviews. Commissioner Jaynes added that interviews will take place on November 10, 12, and 14.

A motion was made by Chair Knott to reopen the chaperone application window from October 22 until November 7. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt, a vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

Staff Liaison Acker stated that the applications would get back up on the City website, the Facebook page would reflect the new date, and past applicants would be reached out to.

2. Staff Liaison Acker shared where the Commission is with the video process, and is hoping to wrap it up by the end of next week. Commissioners Jaynes and DeWitt noted that they would come in to interview to add to the video. Commissioner DeWitt clarified that the video would be shared with the whole high school and potentially the middle school as well.

Staff Liaison Acker suggested that, with all the outreach that is being done, there be an informational night for those who are interested in more information, potentially at the beginning of December. She added that the student application deadline is December 5.

Commissioner DeWitt asked if December 5 was the original deadline or if that was the deadline that was set back, as there needs to be enough time for families. Commissioners discussed when the deadline should be for an informational night, applications, and interviews before the December 17 meeting. Commissioners suggested having a table at the upcoming high school conferences, October 28, with more information. Staff Liaison Acker stated that there is a lot of material available to have at conferences if wanted. Commissioner DeWitt and Hokanson volunteered to sit at a table at the high school for conferences to share information.

Staff Liaison Acker clarified that an informational meeting would be on December 1 at the high school at 6:30 p.m., applications due on December 5, interviews the week of December 8 through 13, and selection at the December 17 meeting. Student Advisory Member Nisha Catarino Santiago suggested having refreshments and fun activities to engage the students.

3. Commissioner Werner is available to attend the upcoming 2025 student presentation to the City Council on October 27. Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago discussed that three others, along with herself, would be able to attend and potentially conduct an activity as well. Councilmember Lambert noted that the Council is looking forward to the presentation.
4. Commissioner Hokanson gave an update on the service organization presentations. She noted that they were at the Elks recently, and the presentation went well. Staff Liaison Acker noted that there is another presentation coming up in November for Kiwanis.

C. Friendship Delegation Committee Update.

Chair Knott stated there were no updates.

D. YAAS Committee (Young Artists and Authors Showcase) Update.

Chair Knott stated there were no updates.

Staff Liaison Acker noted that an email had been sent asking for the theme, and a reply was received that apologized for the delay and that it would be on the website within a month. Commissioner Kreye noted that on the YAAS Facebook page in August, there was a note about the theme being Voices of Today, Visions of Tomorrow.

8. Communication Items

A. Sister Cities Commission Meeting and Workshop Schedule.

Chair Knott reviewed the upcoming meetings along with the changes that were made at the meeting.

Staff Liaison Acker explained that the November 17 meeting can transition into a workshop meeting based on the needs of the Commission.

9. Adjournment

Chair Knott adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.